

Singularity, by James Swallow

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[Part One]

(Buzzer, door opens. News report in background.)

HOUSE: Welcome home, Lena Korolev. You have one new message.

LENA: Yes, yes. Shut up, House, and warm the tea for me. Alexi? Alexi? I need some help with the shopping bags.

(Bag breaks.)

LENA: Oh, no. All the way from Gum, and it splits when I get through the door. Alexi? Could you turn off the vid and help me, please? (silence) Babushka? No. You said you wouldn't go.

CORD: Your brother is not here, Miss Korolev. He has decided to move on with his life.

LENA: Who are you? What are you doing in my home? House, dial the police immediately.

CORD: House? Ignore that last order.

HOUSE: Call request aborted.

LENA: How did you do that? Stay away from me. I know who you are, you Sleeper freak. What have you done with Alexi?

CORD: Oh, please. The term Sleeper is so derogatory. The work of the Somnus Foundation is about the awakening of Mankind's potential.

LENA: Where is my brother? You took him.

CORD: He came of his own free will. He asked me to remain to see that you understood his, his decision. House? Play message.

ALEXI [OC]: Zdravstvuy, sister. I'm sorry. I know I said I would think about it some more, but I did, and I knew this was right for me. You don't like the Foundation, and that's your choice, but it is what I want.

LENA: No.

ALEXI [OC]: I love you very much. And I'm more grateful than you know for what you did after Mamma died, but you are smothering me now. I have to move on, and I have questions that I think Somnus can answer. Please don't be angry. This is what I want. I hope you will understand that. Goodbye, Lena.

LENA: What did you do to him? Drugs? Brainwashing? You disgust me, preying on someone weak and impressionable.

CORD: You are the weak one, Miss Korolev. Alexi has shown strength by taking a leap of faith. You are the one too afraid to let go. You should be proud of him. Alexi has exceptional potential. He will be given a true name before the day is out, something which every Somnus acolyte aspires to.

LENA: To hell with your idiotic drive! I won't let you keep my brother.

CORD: It is too late. He is one of us. Accept it. When the human species ascends, we will be the vanguard, and those like you will be left behind. I can see myself out.

(Tardis console beeps.)

DOCTOR: Flux instability? No, we can't have that.

(Internal door opens.)

TURLOUGH: (yawning) Are we landing? I thought you said we'd be travelling a whole longer...

DOCTOR: Out of the way, please, thank you.

TURLOUGH: I can't sleep through a landing. I don't know what it is about them.

DOCTOR: I'd prefer it if you didn't hover, Turlough. I've enough to contend with without you causing an obstruction.

TURLOUGH: Oh well, excuse me.

(Fizzing.)

TURLOUGH: That's not supposed to happen.

DOCTOR: Do be quiet!

(The Tardis materialises.)

TURLOUGH: I'll hazard a guess and say temporal instability. Another time corridor?

DOCTOR: A phase shift. We've entered a zone of Space Time with inherent causal discontinuities.

TURLOUGH: And where has that put us?

DOCTOR: Ah. Earth.

TURLOUGH: Again. You know, just for a change it might be nice to ignore one of these unscheduled stops. Just pass it by.

DOCTOR: Do you have even the first inkling of how dangerous it would be to ignore a phase-displaced area of the continuum?

TURLOUGH: Of course I do, but

(Tardis door opens.)

DOCTOR: It's rather brisk outside, I'd get an overcoat if I were you.

TURLOUGH: Doctor, can't I just...

DOCTOR [OC]: Come on, Turlough .

TURLOUGH: ... go back to sleep.

DOCTOR: Bracing.

TURLOUGH: In my experience that's just a euphemism for really very cold. And it is.

DOCTOR: This is a balmy evening by local standards. The last time I was here it was the coldest October I'd ever seen. Everything frozen. Water in the fountains, blood on the streets.

TURLOUGH: This is Moscow.

DOCTOR: Yes. Well-spotted.

TURLOUGH: The fact that the Tardis landed in the shadow of Lenin's tomb sort of gave it away.

DOCTOR: I don't think he'll mind. A disagreeable man anyway. Terrible breath. This way. Keep your eyes open for anything out of the ordinary.

TURLOUGH: It might help if I knew what to look for. This phase shift. That means we're stuck here?

DOCTOR: For the moment at least. I need to make some recalibrations and some observations .

TURLOUGH: Well, if you're looking for a vantage point, that building across the square might be a good choice. It's the tallest thing around here.

DOCTOR: That's the Kremlin, Turlough. I hardly think they're going to let me back in there. (sotto) Not after the last time.

TURLOUGH: No, no, no, behind it. Look, there. The silver tower.

DOCTOR: Good grief. What is that? The design seems almost Rigellian.

TURLOUGH: A skyscraper. I didn't think they had many of those in Russia.

DOCTOR: Not until the mid-twentieth century, no. But that specific architectural style won't be created by humans for at least another six hundred years.

TURLOUGH: Probably just a coincidence. I mean, it's just a building .

DOCTOR: Like the Tardis is just a Police Box. Come on, we should be able to get there on foot.

TURLOUGH: Would it matter if I said my extremities are going numb with the chill?

DOCTOR: Then the walk will be good for your circulation.

TEV: The psi-gate opens. Prepare the husk. The displacement is almost complete.

NATALIA: Yes, Tev.

TEV: It sickens me that I must tolerate the overspill of your kind's archaic emotions. I detest this loathsome practice. If this migration were not so important, I would leave it to the other Custodians.

NATALIA: Tev, please.

TEV: To think that one day it could be *my* essence that is displaced. Oh, it makes me ill, and angry. It comes. Secure the body. It would not please Seo if his flesh cores were damaged.

(Scream.)

ALEXI: No. My mind. Feels like it was ripping apart.

NATALIA: Don't struggle. It will only hurt more.

TEV: Urgh! The beast's psyche stinks of fear. Be silent, savage!

ALEXI: They told me the Foundation would help me. Where am I? Oh God, please!

NATALIA: There are no gods here, child. They are all dead now.

TEV: Listen to it whine. I feel soiled to be in its presence. Pathetic animal. You should be grateful your aura type was compatible with one of us. Perhaps now your pointless existence might have some value.

ALEXI: I can't feel my hands. My face. What's wrong with my face?

NATALIA: You have been taken, child. You have come to the last outpost. We have arrived on Ember to end here in darkness.

TEV: Show it. Show the savage its reflection.

NATALIA: There's no need for cruelty.

TEV: Look in the mirror, savage. See the husk you inhabit.

ALEXI: What have you done to me? Argh!

TURLOUGH: This place is huge. It's like someone took a giant icicle and stuck it in the middle of the city.

DOCTOR: Yes. I've always found the psychology of oppressive architecture quite fascinating.

(A bell tolls in the distance.)

TURLOUGH: How could something made of glass stand so high? Humans in this era don't have the sort of technology to build this, do they?

DOCTOR: A very adroit question. Be a good fellow and walk around the perimeter, would you? There's an alleyway just over there.

TURLOUGH: You still haven't told me what I'm looking for.

DOCTOR: Oh, come now, Turlough. You've travelled with me long enough. You know how this sort of thing works. Be alert. Go on, off you go.

TURLOUGH: Fine, whatever you say, Doctor. After all, it's not like you feel the cold.

ROBOT: Hello, traveller. I am Qel, leader of the Somnus Foundation, and this automated unit is programmed to respond to any questions about our organisation. Welcome to the Somnus Tower. Our Foundation is happy to extend its hospitality to all visitors. Would you like to know more about our vision?

DOCTOR: Well, I suppose so.

ROBOT: Have you ever wondered about the fate of your species?

DOCTOR: Not really, but then you see, I'm not...

ROBOT: Many cultures predict an end of human-kind in the near future. An Armageddon that will end the world. But we disagree. In Somnus, we share the belief of a manifest destiny for our species. A future where Human Listener 20 evolves into a form beyond our crude flesh and blood.

DOCTOR: Now, let me stop you there. Psychic transubstantiation is an extremely delicate business, and...

ROBOT: We know the future of Man.

DOCTOR: I rather doubt that.

ROBOT: There is no deity to worship in our church. At Somnus, we will become our own gods, and we want the stars.

DOCTOR: There are a few interstellar civilisations that might take issue with that philosophy.

ROBOT: Would you like a red pamphlet?

DOCTOR: Oh. Thank you. Now tell me, have you ever seen the Crystal Towers of Rigel 7? An Earth Empire colony, circa 2620?

ROBOT: Please rephrase your question. I am unfamiliar with Rigel 7.

DOCTOR: Of course you are.

TURLOUGH: Come now, Turlough, you've travelled with me long enough. Yeah. Sometimes I think it's too long. This thing is weird. No seams at all, like the whole tower was extruded out of something. Oh! I really, really, really hate being cold. I suppose it's too much to ask to arrive somewhere tropical with beaches and pretty girls? What am I doing anyway? Standing in a Moscow back alley talking to myself and trying not to freeze my...

(Door slides open.)

CORD: Move it.

LENA: Let go of me! Ah!

TURLOUGH: Oh no.

LENA: You're hurting me.

CORD: I warned you. I told you to stay away. You didn't listen.

TURLOUGH: This is nothing to do with me. I'm just going to be quiet and not get involved.

LENA: Please someone, help me.

TURLOUGH: We'll go back to the Tardis and leave...

CORD: Be quiet!

TURLOUGH: ... and that will be that.

(Slap! Lena cries out.)

TURLOUGH: Oh, hell. Doctor! Doctor, back here, quickly! I know I'm going to regret this. Oi, you! What do you think you're doing? Let her go!

LENA: Please, help me.

CORD: You should mind your own business. Bad things can happen to nosy tourists in this city.

TURLOUGH: Listen pal, I am a lot of things, but I have never been a tourist.

DOCTOR: Someone once told me, the difference between a traveller and tourist is that the traveller doesn't know where he's going and the tourist doesn't know where he is. Hello. I'm the Doctor.

CORD: This is private property.

DOCTOR: Quite correct. I'm so sorry we've inconvenienced you, but I wanted to thank you personally for finding our friend, er...

LENA: Er, Lena.

DOCTOR: Lena, yes, yes. Terrible mix-up. Took a wrong turn, got left behind by the tour bus. You know how it is. Turlough, help her up, won't you?

TURLOUGH: Oh, right.

CORD: The, the woman's with you?

DOCTOR: Yes.

TURLOUGH: She is?

DOCTOR: Yes. Thanks again. Ciao.

CORD: Wait! You can't just leave.

LENA: Who are you? What did you do back there?

DOCTOR: I've dealt with that type so many times, it's not even a challenge any more. The right application of authority in one's tone does wonders.

LENA: You're not with the Sleepers, not wearing an outfit like that anyway.

DOCTOR: Sleepers? You're referring to the Somnus Foundation people?

LENA: They hate the name, but that's what they really are. Sleepwalking through life. [unintelligible] and brainless.

DOCTOR: Not literally, I hope?

TURLOUGH: He didn't look that dumb. He's following us.

LENA: This way, quickly. (whistles) Pavel, come on, get over here.

(Vehicle stops.)

PAVEL: Lena? What's going on? Who are these men?

LENA: The Sleepers are right behind us. Open the door, we have to go.

PAVEL: I'm not letting two complete strangers into my van. They could be anybody. Somnus spies or public security directors.

DOCTOR: I assure you, we're nothing of the sort. This is Turlough, and I'm the Doctor.

LENA: Pavel, I don't have time for one of your paranoid episodes. Open the door.

PAVEL: All right. But if anything happens, I'm blaming you.

(Van door opens and closes. Vehicle drives off.)

PAVEL: When I agreed to help, you didn't say anything about involving other people.

LENA: If it hadn't been for these other people, there's no telling what those Sleepers would have done. They rescued me.

PAVEL: Just the same, don't expect me to let them have access to the secure facility.

DOCTOR: Secure facility?

LENA: Pavel lives in his grandmother's basement.

PAVEL: It's a bunker. Protection from the likes of the Foundation and their global conspiracy.

DOCTOR: Really? How nice.

TURLOUGH: You must have done something serious to upset this Somnus lot.

LENA: If you mean, did I spit their lies back in their sanctimonious faces? Did I dare to call them what they really are? Then yes.

DOCTOR: And what are they, Lena?

LENA: Monsters.

(Door slides open. Background musak.)

QEL: Cord, there you are.

CORD: Great Qel. Thank you for your attention.

QEL: Yes, yes. Music off.

(Musak stops.)

QEL: Noise is so tiresome.

CORD: You asked that I bring you the report from the psi-gate?

QEL: Give it to me. Seo's transfer proceeded without incident, then? More's the pity.

CORD: I thought you would welcome his arrival. Surely this is a sign that the evolution is ready to progress to the next phase?

QEL: That remains to be seen.

CORD: I had, I had hoped that soon I might be granted the honour of a true name, as the Korolev youth was today?

QEL: Your time will come, Mister Cord.

CORD: I only wish to serve the Foundation.

QEL: And so you do. Your talents are useful to the Somnus. You help us bring humanity closer to the point of change.

CORD: As you wish. Korolev's sister attempted to penetrate the Tower this evening. She was apprehended in the Omnihedron Room.

QEL: Mmm. A great pity that she did not share the same aura type as her sibling. But no matter. Make sure she does not draw any undue attention to us.

CORD: That may be difficult.

QEL: Why?

CORD: She had assistance from two unknowns. She escaped in an unmarked delivery van. We are attempting to track it.

QEL: No matter. I have her aura type on record. Perhaps this might be a good time to run another Phase One test. Do so, and use the Korolev woman's mental template as the locus.

CORD: I will prepare the equipment.

QEL: Is that all?

CORD: One other item. An automated alert was sent from your laboratory computer system, and...

QEL: What?

CORD: Well, I, I wasn't sure of the priority of it.

QEL: Give me the data pad. Why didn't you mention this first? This report is over an hour old.

CORD: But Great Qel, I thought...

(Slap!)

QEL: Idiot. I have been waiting for this signal trace for years, and now I may have missed my opportunity because of your laxity. Get out of my sight!

CORD: Yes, Great Qel.

(Leaves.)

QEL: Can it be? Chronometric pattern is identical. The Tardis at last.

DOCTOR: Here, take this. You'll feel much better.

LENA: Thank you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: What about your friend? Will he be all right alone in the van? Should I get another tea for him?

LENA: Pavel never goes outside if he can help it. He says it leaves him too exposed.

DOCTOR: I see. That would explain the rather musky aroma inside his vehicle.

TURLOUGH: Mmm. Warmth. This would be the best tea I'd ever tasted, if my mouth wasn't numb with the chill, of course.

DOCTOR: You'll have to excuse Turlough, Lena. Anything below room temperature triggers an involuntary grumbling reaction in him.

TURLOUGH: I'm not used to the cold.

LENA: Isn't England always cold and foggy?

TURLOUGH: I'm not English. Neither of us are.

LENA: But your accent.

DOCTOR: Let's just say Turlough and I are both rather well-travelled.

LENA: You certainly know your way round Moscow.

DOCTOR: This city and I are old friends. They say her name comes from the words Moska ava.

LENA: Mother bear, yes. I can't thank you enough for what you did at the tower. You don't even know me and yet, you intervened on my behalf.

TURLOUGH: That's what we do, so it seems.

LENA: There are few people who would put themselves in the harm's way where the Sleepers are concerned. People don't want to get on the wrong side of them. They have powerful connections. I'm afraid you've made some enemies tonight.

TURLOUGH: Wouldn't be the first time.

DOCTOR: But we also met you, a new friend. So that balances the scales in a cosmic sense. What's your quarrel with them?

LENA: They promise the future. You know, they promise a better tomorrow, a Utopian Earth, but it's all lies.

DOCTOR: Yes, it is.

LENA: My younger brother Alexi, he wanted badly to belong, and they took advantage of him. Here. This is a picture of us at the Winter Market.

DOCTOR: Handsome lad. The older woman there, your mother?

LENA: Yes. All these stories about what the Sleepers do with the people they recruit, the way they use them, he ignored it all. He's all I have, you see, and now he's gone to them, and the last thing we shared were hard words in anger. I'm afraid I'll never see him again.

TURLOUGH: He's in there, in the Tower?

LENA: It's their dormitory as well as their church.

DOCTOR: Brave heart, Lena. We'll see what we can do to help you.

TURLOUGH: Doctor, we have other concerns to deal with.

DOCTOR: All in good time. Ah, this really is a gorgeous view, with the lights across the Sparrow Hills and the Neskuchny Gardens. Makes me feel a hundred years younger.

LENA: Doctor, I appreciate your offer, but you've already risked yourself once tonight for me. What more could you do?

DOCTOR: I'm starting to think I'd like to take a look around inside the Somnus Tower. Just a peek, you know. I'm sure they wouldn't mind.

TURLOUGH: And how do you plan to do that? Walk in through the front door?

DOCTOR: Well yes, actually. They gave me a leaflet and everything. Look.

QEL: Find your future at the Somnus Foundation. Come in for refreshments and a free aura reading at any time. All are welcome.

DOCTOR: There, you see? All are welcome.

LENA: Don't be fooled by, by their...

TURLOUGH: Lena, what's wrong?

LENA: I'm not sure. My head. Pressure.

DOCTOR: Do you feel that?

TURLOUGH: Yeah. It's turning thick. Greasy.

LENA: Oh.

CORD: Great Qel, I have the Korolev woman's aura type locked into the broadcast system.

QEL: Trigger the Unity Programme.

CORD: Which intensity setting?

QEL: One quarter power. Keep it localised. We don't want a repeat of what happened with those mad dogs in Sztum Yani.

CORD: Ready.

QEL: Execute. Dasvidaniya, Lena Korolev.

TURLOUGH: Doctor! The birds, in the trees, they're coming!

DOCTOR: Lena. Lena, can you hear me?

TURLOUGH: She's out of it.

DOCTOR: Turlough, stay down.

TURLOUGH: The claws! We have to get back to the van.

DOCTOR: There's so many. Something must be driving them into a frenzy.

TURLOUGH: Get away from me, you flea-ridden feather duster!

DOCTOR: Whatever it is, it isn't affecting us.

TURLOUGH: Do something, quickly.

DOCTOR: I'm going to try. Here we are. My Molenski Univarius on a sub-sonic setting.

DOCTOR: Adjust the amplitude. Just find the right pitch to cause these birds a maximum discomfort, and...

TURLOUGH: Where did they come from?

DOCTOR: Lena, are you all right?

LENA: What, what was that?

DOCTOR: I'm not sure. The birds went wild, but it seemed they were only interested in you.

PAVEL: Lena! Lena!

LENA: Better later than never, Pavel.

PAVEL: Another animal attack. I knew it. I knew there were more to them than random chance.

DOCTOR: In my experience there's no such thing as random chance.

PAVEL: This isn't the first time this has happened. Feral cats, dogs attacks, packs of rodents. The Government hushes it up, but there are more and more of them each week.

LENA: They were after me. I could feel it in my head, an echo like a bell tolling.

DOCTOR: Pavel, she needs medical attention.

PAVEL: I have supplies at home. I'll see to her.

TURLOUGH: What about us? Urgh, I've got bird poo on me.

DOCTOR: You have a handkerchief, don't you? Make yourself presentable, Turlough. We're going back to the Tower.

PAVEL: You shouldn't return there. If you are recognised, they will disappear you.

DOCTOR: Oh, I intend to remain quite visible for the moment, thank you.

PAVEL: You've saved Lena's life twice, so, I suppose that means I can trust you a little. Here. This is where we will be.

TURLOUGH: The location of your secret bunker.

PAVEL: My grandmother's house.

LENA: Turlough, be careful.

DOCTOR: We will.

ROBOT: Greeting, travellers. Please come with us for a warm beverage and your complimentary aura reading.

DOCTOR: Try not to get yourself noticed.

TURLOUGH: This hat isn't much of a disguise. Yuk. The fur makes my head itch.

DOCTOR: Seems to have done the trick. No one stopped us coming in.

TURLOUGH: Perhaps because it'll be easier to disappear us indoors.

DOCTOR: Must you be so negative? Where's your sense of adventure ?

TURLOUGH: In the Tardis, in a box marked Sense Of Adventure.

ROBOT: Our future history guides are available...

DOCTOR: Future history? I think I'll take a look. They might appreciate the point of view of someone who's actually been there.

TURLOUGH: What am I supposed to do?

DOCTOR: Haven't you ever wondered what colour your aura is, Turlough ?

QEL: What is it, Cord? I have a new group to evaluate.

CORD: Great Qel, my apologies for interrupting you, but I think there may be an interloper in this evening's induction. The young man with the fur hat. He may have been the one I saw with the Korolev woman before.

QEL: Indeed. Perhaps you should give him a reading. Find out what you can.

CORD: Hello, and welcome to the Foundation. Are you interested in our vision?

TURLOUGH: I suppose so. What's this aura thing the robot spoke about?

CORD: Ah, your interest is piqued. Here at the Somnus Foundation we believe that all humans emit a field of psychic energy, and that a reading of that aura holds the key to understanding a person's destiny.
TURLOUGH: What, like a crystal ball or something.
CORD: Nothing so random. The aura reading is a window to your inner self. It shows your personal timeline, your past and your future. Would you like to see it?
TURLOUGH: Okay. Yeah, why not.
CORD: Take a seat at the console. Let's see what we can learn about you.

DOCTOR: (reading) By 2090 the Foundation's brightest minds will terraform Earth's sister world of Mars. Hmm. Do the locals get a say about that?
QEL: Are you interested in destiny, friend?
DOCTOR: I'm afraid you're off-beam on human history by a rather sizeable amount.
QEL: These works express the pure vision of Somnus. Our prophecy is...
DOCTOR: Subjective, to say the least. I mean, look at this. The entry of the 49th century says absolutely nothing about the Fifth World War.
QEL: Of course. Forgive me, I must ask. Have we met before? You seem familiar.
DOCTOR: Oh, no. I'm sure I'd remember if we had. I've got one of those faces, you know.
QEL: Indeed. Are you a student of precognition?
DOCTOR: I suppose you could say that I deal in the futures market on occasion.

TURLOUGH: Well, what colour is it? Something warm and fuzzy to match my sunny disposition?
CORD: I... The readings are peculiar. Perhaps the machine is in error.
TURLOUGH: No. I'm just a very unique kind of guy. On this planet, at least.
CORD: I'm afraid our reading's over, my friend. Ladies and gentlemen, if you would please follow the acolytes to the Omnihedron Room for refreshments.
TURLOUGH: Well, thanks.
CORD: Not you. You're coming with me.
TURLOUGH: Hey! Ow! Take it easy.

DOCTOR: I must say, I did find this entry very interesting. Er, in the middle of Earth's 22nd century an alien invasion will arrive. The machine monsters will fail. Now, is that the Daleks or the Cybermen? I can't quite recall.
QEL: Those words. I am afraid I'm unfamiliar with them. You have me at a disadvantage, sir. I'm Qel, leader of the Somnus Foundation. May I have your name?
DOCTOR: No. I'll keep hold of it, if that's all the same to you.
QEL: As you wish.
TURLOUGH: Don't push me. I can walk on my own.
CORD: Qel, these are the men who assisted the Korolev woman.
TURLOUGH: Who?
DOCTOR: That will be Lena. She's rather worried about her brother. I thought you might want to put her mind at rest, Qel.
QEL: The whereabouts of Alexi Korolev are none of her concern.
SEO: On the contrary, they are very much her concern.
CORD: Great Seo.
DOCTOR: I know you. Yes, from the photo. It's Alexi, yes?
SEO: I have given up that identity now. I have embraced the true name of Seo, and taken my place as an honoured traveller in Somnus.
TURLOUGH: Lost the accent too.
DOCTOR: Indeed. I must say, that's a fast rise considering you've only just joined the Foundation.
SEO: My aura illuminated the path for me. Qel, you need not involve yourself here. I will deal with this.
QEL: I disagree. These men had questions, and now they are answered. Let them go on their way.
SEO: They entered the tower under false pretences.
QEL: And we *forgive* them for it. Cord?
CORD: Yes, Great Qel. This way, please.
DOCTOR: (receding) Oh. Well, goodbye, then. Thank you for the tea and biscuits.
QEL: Do not try to undermine my authority.
SEO: Don't! Is this your idea of leadership? Living with these savages has made you slow-brained. I only hope my arrival has come in time to ensure the safety of the evolution.

TURLOUGH: What just happened? I thought they were going to whip out guns and shoot us or something.
DOCTOR: Yes, I must admit it's rather atypical behaviour for someone clearly engaged in a temporal conspiracy. I think if they knew who I was it might have been a different story.
TURLOUGH: Well, we shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth, Doctor. We should go.

DOCTOR: Yes, I'm sure Lena will want to know about her brother.

(Distortion.)

TURLOUGH: That sound. It's happening again. Stronger this time.

DOCTOR: Double image. Everything is splitting into two.

TURLOUGH: The Tower. It's the Tower.

DOCTOR: Time rift. My timeline is diverging. Can't stop

[Part Two]

TURLOUGH: Urgh. I feel like I'm going to throw up.

DOCTOR: Yes, temporal inversions will do that to you. Take deep breaths, you'll be fine.

TURLOUGH: When we landed in the Tardis the same thing happened. But this was much worse.

DOCTOR: It's accelerating. I was afraid of this.

TURLOUGH: No one else seems to have noticed.

DOCTOR: No. That's a peculiarity of being a time traveller. Exposure to the energies of the temporal vortex makes you more sensitive to these sorts of things.

TURLOUGH: What sort of things?

DOCTOR: Turlough, we're in the midst of a time fracture, the formation of a branch point where history is about to diverge from its established path. Because neither of us originates in this time period we can see the shifts as they happen. I doubt whether anyone native to this era perceived anything untoward just then.

TURLOUGH: Time fracture? Tell me it sounds worse than it really is.

DOCTOR: The reverse is true, actually. If Earth's history is altered in the 21st century, it will have consequences on an intergalactic scale.

TURLOUGH: But they haven't even left their solar system yet. Why would it matter?

DOCTOR: Ah. You need to think fourth dimensionally. Changing Earth's history now will ripple out into the time stream and reorder galactic events from now until Entropy Tuesday.

TURLOUGH: You knew this was going on, didn't you? That's why we came here, isn't it?

DOCTOR: I suspected, yes, but I wasn't sure. Now

TURLOUGH: Just for once, Doctor, it might be nice for you to tell me when danger's looming. I'm getting sick of being your passenger all the time.

DOCTOR: Yes, of course. I'm sorry, Turlough. I get caught up in these things. Let's go and visit Pavel's bunker.

QEL: Commence recording. Have I slaved here in this pitiful wasteland for nothing? After years of this maddening, stinking flesh, just as the goal is within my grasp, *he* arrives. Seo. The millennia on Ember have made him more arrogant, if such a thing is possible. He shows no respect for my work, no regard for the indignities I've suffered. I hate him so much. And yet, the evolution is nothing without him. The Phase One programme tests proceed with satisfactory results. The resonance of the lower phylum animal minds shows a level of parity that is well above my projections. I'm encouraged. And more so by the detection of the artron energy signature within the city limits.

(Door opens.)

SEO: Talking to yourself, Qel? How whimsical.

(Door closes.)

QEL: These are my private chambers.

SEO: No door is barred to me. You would do well to remember that. What is this you are toying with?

(laughs) Your tests. Amusing yourself with the savages, tormenting the poor beasts?

QEL: Do not denigrate my experiments, Seo. They form a vital part of the Great Work. You of all people should be aware of that.

SEO: You have played your games in your pretty glass castle long enough, Qel. Our brethren remain lost in the future, and what have you done? Created a cult of apathetic barbarians. Dallied with trivialities. No more! Entropy comes ever closer, and time's predator is at our door. We must move forward. You know the choice before us.

QEL: Evolution or dissolution.

SEO: Indeed. Now, you have something to show me?

QEL: You're mistaken, Seo.

SEO: Do not insult my intelligence! Show me the data Cord brought from the laboratory.

QEL: Very well. Here.

SEO: Hmm. Yes, of course. Artron energy, chronometric displacement. A Time Lord.

QEL: Indeed. The reading is too diffuse to divine a precise location yet, but it is close.

SEO: Your attempts at subterfuge are tiresome, Qel. You'd have kept this from me in order to make me lose face. The fate of our race is in the balance, and still you think only for yourself. A Gallifreyan. Hmm. Could be *him*.

QEL: Of course it is. You spoke to him yourself tonight.

SEO: What? The, the blond haired one? You are certain it was him?

QEL: You have become slow and senile, Seo. It is a pitiable sight. Yes, the blond man. Probably one of his early corporeal incarnations. I could smell it on him, that smug self-importance. The callous disdain as...

SEO: He was here, and you allowed him to leave? Are you insane?

QEL: And what would you have done if you'd held him? Put him to the question, Seo? Your brute clumsy methods would have destroyed his mind and then we would have nothing.

SEO: Arrogant fool. You risk our future.

QEL: I will save it! You know nothing of my plans. Let him think he is free. It will make him complacent, inattentive, and then I will take what I need. He saw poor young Alexi Korolev in need of rescue. He will be back. It is his way. He cannot stop himself from interfering.

SEO: If he slips from our grasp again...

QEL: He shall not. And then, he will pay for the cowardice and treachery of the Time Lords. The Doctor will be punished a billion times over for his betrayal of our species!

LENA: I thought you said you had food here.

PAVEL: In the cupboard. Microwave borscht and beef.

LENA: Urgh. Pavel, this has gone off.

PAVEL: No, they all smell like that. All Soviet Union ration packs. Guaranteed to last forever and withstand nuclear strikes.

LENA: If this was all I'd have to eat, I'd take the nuke, thank you. Have you found anything?

LENA: Not yet. I've checked, er, secretrussia dot com, Glass Curtain and the Conspiracy Crew bulletin boards, but - there's no mention of any Sleeper activity or the bird attack. They keep talking about a weird thing in Red Square, something about a big blue box. Sounds like one of those arty statements the aesthetic revolution crowd are always doing. I'll keep looking.

LENA: You're a good friend, Pavel. Mamma always said, that Pavel Fedorin has a kind soul.

PAVEL: I miss her too, Lena.

LENA: What about the Doctor and Turlough? Come on, I know you did a search on them both the moment you got back here.

PAVEL: Mmm. The younger one, he's got nothing on globalnet and, er, I didn't get a face match for the Doctor guy, but there are some odd heads popping up on that alias, although pictures are of totally different people.

LENA: Well, whoever they are, they're not part of Somnus, and that's good enough for me.

PAVEL: Visitors. Speak of the devil.

DOCTOR: (intercom) Er, hello? Anyone home? Turlough, are you sure this is the right address?

(Buzz, heavy door open.)

DOCTOR: Oh. Thank you.

(Door closes.)

DOCTOR: What an interesting place you have here.

TURLOUGH: It looks like an explosion in a wire factory.

PAVEL: This is work in progress.

LENA: Doctor, did you see Alexi?

DOCTOR: Lena, I'm afraid the news isn't good. Yes, we saw him, but he didn't seem to be in any hurry to leave the Foundation.

TURLOUGH: He calls himself Seo now.

PAVEL: Huh! All the big-shot Sleepers have those true names. They say it's part of their evolution to a higher consciousness. Stupid, if you ask me.

LENA: Did he speak to you? Perhaps he was drugged or being coerced.

DOCTOR: No, he was quite lucid. In fact, he seemed more in control of them than they were of him. I'm sorry, Lena, but I don't think Alexi will be coming home any time soon.

LENA: I see. Excuse me, please. I'm going to get something. Something to eat.

TURLOUGH: Lena, wait.

(Door closes.)

DOCTOR: I do hate bearing bad news. So, Pavel, is it? How do you know Lena?

PAVEL: We played together as children. We were neighbours in Ryazanskiy Prospekt.

DOCTOR: She's fortunate to have a friend like you.

PAVEL: Good fortune has never been a visitor at her home, but I do what I can.

DOCTOR: I must say, you have an eclectic collection of material here. Oh yes. Spates Catalogue, classified files from Project Sine, Tartokovsky's theory on N-Space. Is that a photo of a Yeti?

PAVEL: Are you familiar with the beast?

DOCTOR: Rather more than I'd like to be, actually. What does your grandmother think of your, er, hobby?

PAVEL: Oh, she's in Odessa visiting my aunt. I'm interested in the dark edges of the unknown, Doctor. The anomalous and the hidden.

DOCTOR: And the Somnus Foundation.

PAVEL: A conspiracy among conspiracies, at the very heart of Rodina.

LENA: Mamma, what can I do?

TURLOUGH: Lena, I, I'm sorry about Alexi.

LENA: You're sorry. You are sorry and I am sorry. The Doctor is sorry and Pavel is sorry. Everyone is sorry. Everyone except Alexi who isn't sorry at all that he left his sister behind. Do you know loneliness, Turlough? Can you understand how it feels to be totally isolated?

TURLOUGH: It's cold, like a numbness that covers every part of you, as if the world keeps on turning without you. Like you're...

LENA: Disconnected?

TURLOUGH: Yeah. I know how it feels.

LENA: I swore I would never let Alexi get hurt, you know. I promised my mother, and now I've broken my word.

TURLOUGH: It's not your fault.

LENA: No, it is. Papa was gone before he was born, so all Alexi had was Mamma and me. Without her we were both lost. I tried too hard to take her place, and now I've driven him away.

TURLOUGH: We're going to get him back from the Sleepers. Don't worry. The Doctor, he's very good at this sort of thing. You can trust him. You can, well, trust me too.

LENA: I think we are alike, Turlough. You have to be strong to be alone. I have to be strong. I had to be when Mamma died and it was only the two of us. I was still a girl, but I had to be a woman. I had to be strong for Alexi. Some days, sometimes I wish that I could be weak. I want to be fragile and delicate, and have someone care for me, be strong for me. I get so tired. I just want, I want my brother home safe.

TURLOUGH: Lena.

PAVEL: But the article never went online, and both reporters at SNN later died in very suspicious circumstances. It's a fact that every member of the Somnus Foundation's arbiters exhibits uncommon intelligence and strong personal charisma.

DOCTOR: Well, some people are just gifted.

PAVEL: But most people don't become gifted overnight. Last year, the leader of their European Church was a street thug from Minsk. Now he's a cultured erudite intellectual.

DOCTOR: What does this have to do with what happened to us in Gorky Park?

PAVEL: Mind control, Doctor. Mind control. The KGB were experimenting on it back in the late Twenties. And the Sleepers, they bought up all the technology when the old regime fell. They're testing it on animals, you see?

DOCTOR: It's an interesting theory.

PAVEL: It's more than a theory. It explains how Pushkin and her psychopaths stay above the law and get away with murder.

DOCTOR: I'm sorry. Pushkin?

PAVEL: She's the leader of the cult. Natalia Pushkin. She goes by name Qel now. High Priestess of the New Consciousness.

DOCTOR: Oh yes. We've met.

PAVEL: She's single-handedly responsible for making the Sleepers what they are today. Once the Somnus Foundation was a legitimate research group, studying sleep disorders and neuroscience. But they gradually went further and further off-book. Pushkin used to be a respected scientist, until she turned her crackpot visions into a global cult.

DOCTOR: I sense another conspiracy theory brewing.

PAVEL: There are rumours that she was conducting research for the military, something ultra-secret, to do with human psychic potential. Eleven years ago, there was a huge electrical storm. The Foundation's clinic, out of town in Mitina, was burnt to the ground. Dozens of patients died. And soon after Pushkin remade Somnus in her own image. The thing is, no records of the project she was working on have ever been found.

DOCTOR: When did this happen?

LENA: November 30th. It was a Tuesday.

TURLOUGH: You seem very sure of that.

LENA: I am.

PAVEL: I've spent years trying to uncover the Foundation's secrets, and every lead always points back to that day. Whatever she was doing, Pushkin made sure no one would ever find out what happened there.

TURLOUGH: Maybe we should go and take a look.

PAVEL: At the clinic? It's just a ruin. There's nothing there now.

DOCTOR: Quite right. There's nothing there now.

ALEXI: Wait, please. You can't just leave me here to die.

TEV: We can do as we please, savage. You are nothing but a resource to be exploited, and your gift is ours

to take.

ALEXI: No. I won't let you.

TEV: Nyah! Do not touch me, animal. Do not contaminate me with your mind spores.

NATALIA: Be still. The effect will wear off after a little while.

TEV: Keep your primitive emotions in check, weak pathetic thing, unless you wish to feel my sting again.

ALEXI: Ah! Help me.

NATALIA: Don't agitate yourself when you're around Tev and the others. They find it offensive.

ALEXI: You? You are one of them too.

NATALIA: I'm as human as you. As human as we used to be, at any rate. Sit down, slowly.

ALEXI: I don't understand. What did they do to my body? Everything changed. My face, my arms and legs, all of it. It's like metal, or bone. The Somnus turned me into something horrible!

NATALIA: No, no. This is not your flesh and blood. What you wear is still on Earth, still alive and breathing, but all that made you as a person is here now. You were relocated. There is a new tenant back there, and you have been displaced.

ALEXI: On Earth? But isn't this...?

NATALIA: I have done this a thousand times, and still it becomes no easier. This place is called Ember, child, and in this time, Earth is nothing but ashes, lost in the dark. What's your name?

ALEXI: Alexi. Alexi Korolev. I am so cold.

NATALIA: The cold is all there is now. Look out, Alexi. Look into the night.

ALEXI: What the ...? (gasp) The sky! It's so black. Where are all the stars?

NATALIA: Dead. All save one. There. Above. Do you see it?

ALEXI: So faint, like a dying candle.

NATALIA: The last sun, kept alive beyond its demise by force, but now even that is fading away. The other stars are gone, bleeding away their light, collapsed to barren brown dwarves. This is entropy, child, the death of the universe.

ALEXI: I know you.

NATALIA: My face, yes, but not me. I'm Natalia Pushkin, and I have been here for a very long time.

ALEXI: How can this be? I saw you in the Foundation. You asked me to join.

NATALIA: I was the first one to be taken. I only wish I could have been the last one as well. Even as we speak, Tev is preparing another one of his kindred to make a transition, and usurp the body of an innocent man. It is my weakness that brought them, and now we are all doomed to die in their stead.

ALEXI: No. How can you say that? You can't just throw any hope away.

NATALIA: Hope, Alexi? Look around you. This is the end of existence. There is no place for hope here.

(Tardis doors open.)

DOCTOR: This way. Don't be shy.

PAVEL: The blue box belongs to you? I thought it was some kind of New Wave sculpture, a political aesthetic statement.

DOCTOR: You could look at it that way, I suppose.

LENA: It's strange. The walls...

TURLOUGH: That's how everyone feels the first time. Just go with the flow. You'll get used to it.

LENA: Mmm, right.

DOCTOR: Come on, Pavel, close the doors behind you, there's a good chap. There's an awful draught if you leave them open.

PAVEL: Er...

TURLOUGH: Oh, I'll do it.

(Tardis doors close.)

PAVEL: You said you were not a Government agent, and yet this thing has the words Police Box written on it.

DOCTOR: Oh, come now, I'm the farthest thing from an authority figure you're ever likely to meet. That's the ticket, just bear with me for a moment.

TURLOUGH: Doctor, are you going to do what I think you're going to do?

DOCTOR: I never know what you're thinking, Turlough. That's what makes you such an interesting travelling companion. I just need to make some adjustments so we can safely move from this time zone. Yes. I should have detected that before. There's a distortion grid circling the Somnus Tower.

TURLOUGH: So we can't land inside it, then?

DOCTOR: Ah now, if this was a Type 70, perhaps, but the old girl isn't cut out for the brute force approach.

LENA: How do you think he does the thing with the walls?

PAVEL: Holograms? Yes. Holograms, that's it.

LENA: Doctor, why have you brought us here? Your house of mirrors is nice, but, I don't see how it can help us to learn more about the Sleepers.

DOCTOR: Mitina, you said. A Tuesday.

PAVEL: Mmm, yes.

(The Tardis materialises, door opens.)

PAVEL: Your light show was very interesting, Doctor, thank you, but...

LENA: (gasp) We've moved. How did that happen?

PAVEL: Holograms. It, it must be holograms. Very big, very detailed holograms.

LENA: The clinic up on the hill? But that's been gone for...

DOCTOR: Eleven years. I think if we're quick we might be able to look around before it burns to the ground.

PAVEL: Lena, if we are...

LENA: Is this some sort of sick joke? If we were in the past, then why is the weather all wrong?

DOCTOR: I'm afraid I don't follow you.

LENA: November 30th. It was Moscow's worst storm in fifty years. But I don't see any clouds.

(Thunder.)

PAVEL: Bozhe moy. This really is the past.

LENA: I, I can't stay.

(Rushes off.)

TURLOUGH: Lena, wait! Where's she going? The clinic's the other way.

DOCTOR: Was it something I said? Turlough, you'd best go after her. It's not safe to leave her alone and we don't want to set up more temporal paradoxes than we need to.

TURLOUGH: I'll get her back.

DOCTOR: She's a very emotional young lady.

PAVEL: You have no idea. This way, Doctor. We can enter the clinic grounds through the parkland.

TURLOUGH: Lena! Lena, wait! What's wrong?

LENA: Leave me alone. I have to do this.

TURLOUGH: Lena, we can't just leave the Doctor and Pavel back there. I thought you wanted to rescue your brother.

LENA: I am rescuing him. I will rescue him. If this really is eleven years ago, then I can change it and fix everything. If I save her, then he'll never go to those Sleeper people.

TURLOUGH: Save her? What do you mean?

LENA: Just let me go. The Doctor doesn't have to know.

TURLOUGH: Talk to me, Lena. You have to tell me what's wrong. We ... I'm your friend, aren't I?

LENA: Turlough, my mother died on this night, during the storm.

DOCTOR: Rather forbidding place, isn't it? I've seen Gragantuan Tomb worlds that were more welcoming.

PAVEL: I hate hospitals. Something in the air makes me feel uncomfortable.

DOCTOR: Yes, that would be meta-cognitive imprinting on the brickwork of the building. All the years of negative emotion and mental suffering leech onto the walls after a while. It's like a psychic stain of sorts.

PAVEL: This place is creeping me out.

(Distant sounds of people.)

PAVEL: Did you hear that?

DOCTOR: I think we're expected. In here.

PAVEL: "Faza Ajin Labaratoria." It is just me, or does that sound a bit sinister?

DOCTOR: Oh, you see one sinister laboratory, you've seen them all. Don't dally, Pavel.

(Patients moaning.)

DOCTOR: Oh dear.

PAVEL: Chort vozmi!

DOCTOR: Yes, quite.

PAVEL: Poor fools. Look at them. It's like something out of a Victorian madhouse.

DOCTOR: Yes, except Bedlam never had electromagnetic resonance projectors and quantum image detectors. These displays are monitoring their EEG readings. Quite peculiar.

PAVEL: They're all showing a similar wave pattern. It must be malfunctioning.

DOCTOR: No. It's exactly right. Each of these six people has a near-identical waveform. This is an experiment, Pavel. The Sleepers have deliberately modified the brain chemistry of these people.

PAVEL: Mind control. I told you.

DOCTOR: Nothing so simple, I think. If I can synchronise the patterns...

PATIENTS: Bozhe moy. Bozhe moy. (etc.)

PAVEL: Doctor, I feel strange.

DOCTOR: Pavel, are you all right?

PAVEL: I can hear them in - inside my head.

DOCTOR: Of course. Phase One. The Sleepers needed humans to conduct the research on. This is a small-scale test.

PAVEL: A test of what? These people, they were incoherent and crazed when we came in. But now look at them. They're serene, calm. What does this device do?

DOCTOR: Organic brains have a unique electromagnetic signature. That's what these quantum image detectors are reading. Somehow Qel altered the patterns of these six people and made them uniform. This is what she was hiding.

PAVEL: I've heard of this concept. In theory you could induce artificial telepathy between them, but at what price? The minds of these poor wretches are broken.

(Distant thunder.)

DOCTOR: There's more to it, I'm afraid. Earth's atmosphere has an electromagnetic signature of its own.

PAVEL: Yes, I know of this. It's called the Schumann resonance. The Americans researched military applications for it decades ago, but they couldn't make it work.

DOCTOR: Indeed. If I'm right, the Sleepers aren't trying to create telepaths. They're trying to match minds to the resonance, to create a group consciousness.

PAVEL: That's monstrous. If such a thing were to happen... Dear God, it would be the death of identity. Total instrumentality, no flesh, no self. We'd lose all that we are. Humanity isn't ready for a change like that.

DOCTOR: And it never will be.

PAVEL: What do you mean?

DOCTOR: Pavel, your species thrives on struggle and conflict. It's the best and worst of you, your adaptability and will to endure. Earth has a hard road ahead of it, and premature godhood is certainly not in humankind's future.

PAVEL: It would take an incredible amount of energy to create such a thing.

DOCTOR: The mind of every living being on this planet would instantly become part of one huge psychic entity. Something of unimaginable potential, a...

PAVEL: A singularity.

(Rain falling.)

TURLOUGH: Here. Sit down. This'll keep the rain off us for a bit. Are you crying?

LENA: You have to let me go. There's still time. I can make it if I run.

TURLOUGH: Lena, it's not that simple. You don't understand how this works.

(Distant thunder.)

TURLOUGH: If you change things, it's like ripples on a pond. One small thing leads to another, and...

LENA: I don't care about the small things. I care about Mamma and Alexi. If we can't change anything then why did the Doctor bring us here? We're changing history just by being here, aren't we? Why not one more thing?

TURLOUGH: I can't let you do it.

LENA: She's just one old woman. Answer me, Turlough. Tell me why her living instead of dying will screw up the future? You don't always do what the Doctor tells you, do you?

TURLOUGH: No, but he always seems to know what's right.

LENA: And is it right that my mother dies?

TURLOUGH: Oh, don't make me do this. I'm not the man for this sort of question, I'm really not. I'm not the hero on the moral high ground. I'm not the Doctor. Go on then, go, do it, change things. She'll live, and someone else will die.

LENA: What do you mean?

TURLOUGH: Time. Time doesn't care about us. It doesn't care about the lives of the little people. Big events, all that huge history rolls down like an avalanche and we get crushed underneath. You push time, time pushes back. Save your mother, and someone else will have to die to balance things out. That's how it works. I've seen it. Action, reaction, cause and effect. If you go ahead, it probably won't be anyone you know or care about. Let it happen to someone else. Someone else's mother. Someone else's brother.

LENA: You have a cruel streak, Turlough. You've got the wolf in you.

TURLOUGH: More than you know.

LENA: I feel broken inside. But I can't do it. I won't wish this on anyone else.

TURLOUGH: If it was me, I would have gone. But then, you're a better person than I am.

LENA: Let's get out of here before I change my mind. I'll, I'll find another way to get Alexi back.

(The patients are chanting in the background.)

DOCTOR: Pavel, are you sure you want to do this?

PAVEL: What other way is there, Doctor? You said it yourself. This is what Pushkin was willing to kill for. The truth about the Sleepers is locked inside the minds of these poor wretches. This is the only chance we have to find it. Wire me up.

DOCTOR: I'll get you out at the first sign of trouble.

PAVEL: It's okay. I er, I trust you.

DOCTOR: Pavel, hello. Can you hear me?

PAVEL: We are unity. You do not belong. Displaced. Alien.

DOCTOR: I am the Doctor. Can you tell me what happened to you?

PAVEL: Pushkin became Qel. Corrupted Somnus programme. Schumann. Schumann resonance.

DOCTOR: How did that happen?

PAVEL: She opened her psyche. They sought compatible minds, Pushkin was taken.

DOCTOR: What are the Sleepers planning?

PAVEL: We see probabilities play out, Doctor. Futures potential, immaterial, colliding and swarming.

DOCTOR: You knew I would come here.

PAVEL: In some skeins of time. In others, Qel and her kindred achieve what they intend. All life on Earth shifted from the physical to the metaphor. Infinite. God-like. The universe reels beneath the force of the singularity. Galaxies laid waste, absorbed.

DOCTOR: And here I was expecting the usual alien invasion. Instead I find plans for an evolutionary quantum leap on an astronomical scale. Flesh and bone to non-corporeal existence in the blink of an eye. That'll teach me to be complacent.

PAVEL: Unity. Totality and synthesis. You're part of this, Doctor. You are the catalyst.

DOCTOR: How?

PAVEL: They hate you. They cannot return to Ember, cannot accept the inevitable. They cannot retreat from the edge of the sleep.

DOCTOR: Ember? I've heard that name before.

PAVEL: Here she comes. No joy. Thank you, Doctor. You've given us the means to end the pain.

DOCTOR: But wait. You said I was the cause of this.

PAVEL: Stop. It is Cord.

(Patients chanting.)

DOCTOR: They're overloading the system. Trying to destroy themselves. Pavel. Pavel, you must go.

PAVEL: Doctor.

DOCTOR: Pavel, come on.

PAVEL: Oh. Oh. Want to die. Want to end it. We have to go. It's too late for them.

DOCTOR: Yes. Yes.

CORD: Director Pushkin.

QEL: You will address me by my true name or as Great One, fool. Where are the intruders?

CORD: An electrical fire in the annexe has triggered the alarm system.

QEL: The intruders, I said. Where are they?

TEV: There! There they are.

QEL: Stop them at all costs.

(Gunfire.)

PAVEL: Oh my head. I can't die in the past.

DOCTOR: Yes, it would be a terrible faux pas and rather awkward to explain.

PAVEL: The whole building is catching alight.

DOCTOR: Just as it should. Help me with this chair.

(Glass shatters.)

DOCTOR: If you can't find a fire exit, make one. After you.

PAVEL: Be careful, Doctor, the glass is razor sharp.

DOCTOR: Ow, my arm!

PAVEL: You're bleeding.

DOCTOR: Cut myself on the window. Just a flesh wound, as they say. Pavel, please, with alacrity.

TURLOUGH: I don't believe it! The clinic's on fire. Every time I leave him for five minutes, something ends up burning or blowing up or worse.

LENA: We made that happen by coming here, didn't we? History said it would happen, and it did. We're all just pawns in the game of fate, playing our roles, living and dying. I'm sorry, Turlough, but I'm starting to wish I had never met you, or the Doctor.

TURLOUGH: I couldn't have left you with those Sleepers.

LENA: I just don't know any more.

DOCTOR: (distant) Turlough! Turlough!

PAVEL: (distant) Quickly!

TURLOUGH: Hurry! Get inside the Tardis!

DOCTOR: Time to go.

TURLOUGH: Yes, but...

PAVEL: But what about...?

DOCTOR: No time. Run, run, run!

(Tardis door closed.)

TEV: Open that thing.

(The Tardis dematerialises.)

CORD: Vanished. How could that happen?

QEL: Impossible. Could it be...?

CORD: One of the intruders was injured.

QEL: Yes. I recovered a blood sample from the window for analysis. Remarkable. An artron energy signature.

CORD: Did you see his face?

QEL: No. But I know what he is. I know his kind. He'll come back, and I'll be waiting.

[Part Three]

(The Tardis materialises, door opens.)

PAVEL: Incredible.

LENA: Are we back now?

TURLOUGH: Looks that way.

PAVEL: My bunker.

DOCTOR: Yes, I thought landing here might be a bit less conspicuous than Red Square. I've returned us to a point just after we left.

PAVEL: Time travel. It really *is* possible.

TURLOUGH: Doctor, your arm. Were you shot?

DOCTOR: No, no, it's only a scratch. Looks worse than it is. I think I have a dermal regenerator in one of these pockets. Right, here we are. Should do the trick.

LENA: What was the point of all that? Fighting in the past. We're both idiot tourists who poke around Saint Basil's Cathedral.

DOCTOR: Even the act of observation changes something, Lena. We can't trample heedlessly through history.

TURLOUGH: Didn't you just cause a huge fire?

DOCTOR: I've dedicated my life to stopping those who use Time like a plaything.

LENA: Turlough's right though, isn't he? You and your blue box. I'll bet you make more messes than you ever clean up.

DOCTOR: Well...

LENA: What else are you responsible for, Doctor? The Titanic? The Epegist (sp?) eruption? Global warming?

DOCTOR: Ah.

PAVEL: Lena, he's just trying to help us.

LENA: No, Pavel, I don't think he is.

(A buzzer.)

PAVEL: Lena.

LENA: Leave me alone. I'm going out to get some fresh air. It stinks in here.

PAVEL: Perhaps this place is a little musty.

TURLOUGH: Doctor, I think she might do something we'll all regret.

DOCTOR: It's never easy to understand what it is to hold the past and future in your hands. I never should have let her come with us.

PAVEL: I will talk to her. You have to forgive Lena, it, it's hard for her to remain rational when her family are concerned.

DOCTOR: I know the feeling. I'll go. I'm the one who owes her an explanation.

PAVEL: This is rapidly becoming a very interesting day.

TURLOUGH: Welcome to my life.

SEO: It must vex you, Qel. It must be difficult to let the Gallifreyan fall through your fingers on a second occasion. Twice in one lifetime? Tut, tut, tut. But you bear it with dignity.

QEL: How easy it is for you to mock me, Seo. I allowed him to walk free from the Tower for a reason. While you remained on Ember, I have been toiling here in this primitive backward century, carving out the great work with nothing but stone knives and bear-skins.

SEO: Ha! You make it seem like such an inconvenience. Whoever spent the last decade under warm skies, with sustenance and comforts, while the other shivered in the cold void? Who left me trapped in the End Time while she strutted amongst these savages?

QEL: I could not bring you here until I located a subject with a compatible aura type. Think yourself lucky I found the Korolev boy at all. Others have not been so fortunate.

SEO: I will admit this is a fine vessel for my consciousness. But I never should have left you take the first displacement. You have used your time here to make yourself Goddess of these animals, not to further the work!

QEL: You dare. The existence of our race is at stake and you accuse me of...

(Buzzing.)

SEO: Oh, what is it now?

(Typing on keyboard.)

QEL: Be silent. This is important. Now we shall see if my gamble was warranted.

(Beeps)

QEL: Yes. Yes! I knew it.

SEO: Another of your little experiments?

QEL: Hardly. As of this moment we can take the next step. Phase One testing is finally at an end. Phase Two can begin.

SEO: You are not ready.

QEL: I am now. Observe. You were correct when you said the Doctor escaped me on two occasions. But not for a third time.

SEO: The indicator on the city map. A chronometric particle discharge?

QEL: The artron energy signature matches the blood sample I found when the clinic burned down, and when the sensors first detected the Tardis. The Time Lord has returned, and this time I know precisely where his craft is.

SEO: Good, Qel, good. Perhaps you can atone for the mistakes of the past after all.

QEL: Cord?

CORD [OC]: Yes, Great Qel?

QEL: The Foundation has need of you. Assemble a capture team for immediate deployment.

LENA: I don't have a choice. This is the only way. Local call, Moscow exchange. Dial the Somnus Foundation.

(Number dialled, and ringing tone.)

ROBOT: Hello, traveller. Thank you for calling the Somnus Foundation. I am Qel, leader of our organisation, and this automatic system will answer all of your questions.

LENA: I want to speak to a human being.

ROBOT: If you would like to know more about our vision, press One. If you would like a complimentary aura reading, press Two.

LENA: I have information. I can give you...

(Tapping on booth.)

DOCTOR [OC]: Hello there. Searching for some guidance?

LENA: They ... there was no-one at home.

DOCTOR: What do you think the Sleepers would do, Lena? Give you back Alexi in return for Turlough and I? That's the problem with family, isn't it? They compel you to make choices that you never usually would.

LENA: I don't know where I am any more. Everything seems so unreal, even this place.

DOCTOR: The funfair?

LENA: We used to come here every year. Alexi loved it when he was small. We'd have cups of spiced wine and win prizes in the arcades. Then one year we just stopped visiting. I feel so old. Do you have a family?

DOCTOR: Of sorts. Each time one of them leaves, I think I age a few centuries, but it's the nature of things. Change and evolution.

LENA: Alexi didn't evolve, Doctor. The Sleepers took him from me.

DOCTOR: I thought he went willingly.

LENA: They lied to him. He doesn't understand what is best for him.

DOCTOR: And you do?

LENA: Yes! No, but neither do the Sleepers. The Somnus want to change him into something he isn't.

DOCTOR: You can't hold onto them for ever. You can't protect them from the universe. I've learned that lesson too many times.

LENA: Alexi is all I have, Doctor. I don't want to be alone.

DOCTOR: None of us do. Echoing, empty corridors, bereft of voices and warmth. No way to go through life. But this is the contract you make with fate. If you bring people close, you have to accept the pain of letting them go.

LENA: I don't want to, not again. Why should I have to make that choice again?

DOCTOR: What choice, Lena?

LENA: I can see it in you. You've had to choose as well, haven't you? Stay or go, live or die.

DOCTOR: Tell me about her. What happened on the night of the storm?

LENA: I don't remember the medical name. It was some sort of cancer, destroying her from the inside out. She was in so much pain, every single day. It broke my heart to see her like that. I wanted so much to help her.

DOCTOR: I see.

LENA: The storm blacked out the hospital, and Mamma cried. I'll never forget that sound as long as I live.

Then I just did it. No one would know, and I could tell them it was, was the storm. I wanted to stop the hurt. I turned off the machine and let her sleep.

DOCTOR: You released her, and Alexi never knew.

LENA: No. And with him gone, I can't carry the pain all on my own.

DOCTOR: I'd like to lie to you, tell you I could fix the hurt, but I can't.

LENA: Mamma said that we Russians should do what Russians do best. Endure. I'm not sure I can any more.

DOCTOR: Well, would you'd like a little help, then?

LENA: Who are the Sleepers, Doctor? What are they really?

DOCTOR: I'm not sure yet, but they have a plan. They will unmake everything it touches. We're going to stop them.

LENA: What if we don't?

DOCTOR: Then humans will become gods, and all of history will shatter like glass.

PAVEL: What's it like out there?

TURLOUGH: Out where?

PAVEL: I'm not a fool, Turlough. You and the Doctor, I know what you are. No human technology could have created that Tardis machine. Tell me where you're from. Tell me about the stars.

TURLOUGH: I don't know what to say.

PAVEL: I've been staring at blurry photos of lights in the sky since I was a boy, reading about secrets and conspiracies. And just when I'm starting to question the phantoms I've spent my life chasing, you two arrive in this big blue thing, and set everything back to zero. Tell me, Turlough. I want to know.

TURLOUGH: (sigh) Trion. I was born in a world called Trion. It's a very long way from here.

PAVEL: And yet you look like one of us.

TURLOUGH: Maybe it's you Earthers who look like Trions. Did you think of that? (sigh) I haven't seen much of the universe, really, but I don't know what to tell you. Out there it's just like down here, with good and bad, dark and light.

PAVEL: But you miss home, yes? This Trion?

TURLOUGH: Some days more than others.

PAVEL: I'd like to see it. Just the thought of standing on a surface of an alien planet. It's exhilarating .

TURLOUGH: (laughs) We should swap places, you and me. You can go travelling with the Doctor, and I'll stay here and be sceptical of everything.

(Alarm sounds.)

PAVEL: They've come back.

TURLOUGH: Wait a second. On the monitor. That's not the Doctor .

PAVEL: Bozhe moy. It's Cord. What is he...?

(An explosion.)

LENA: What was that?

DOCTOR: An explosion, from across the square.

LENA: Oh, God. No! Pavel!

TURLOUGH: Oh! My head! Pavel? Pavel, can you hear me?

CORD: You men, spread out and search, quickly. Well, what do we have here? Survivors. How fortunate.

TURLOUGH: Cord.

CORD: Nice to meet you again. Tell me, where is the temporal vessel?

TURLOUGH: Sod off.

(Slap! Turlough cries out.)

CORD: Manners, young man.

CORD: Here. This is it. There's a faint energy trace surrounding the, er, Police Box. Secure it for transport.

TURLOUGH: What are you doing?

CORD: Bring this one with us. His aura scan was unusual. He may have value.

TURLOUGH: Let go! Get off me. Wait, what about Pavel? You can't leave him here. He'll die.

CORD: Yes, he will. A tragedy.

TURLOUGH: You heartless creep.

CORD: I've warned you once to keep a civil tongue in your head! Where is the blond man and the Korolev woman?

TURLOUGH: Go to hell.

CORD: Get the box under cover. Quickly. Move out.

DOCTOR: Pardon me. Excuse me. I'm a Doctor. Just let me through.

LENA: Oh no!

DOCTOR: Turlough!

PAVEL [OC]: Help me.

LENA: Doctor, Pavel's still in there.

DOCTOR: Lena, wait, it's not safe, the whole thing could come down on you. Oh dear.

LENA: Here, over here!

PAVEL: Lena?
DOCTOR: Try not to move, Pavel.
PAVEL: Can't feel my legs.
LENA: Help me to get this cabinet off him.
DOCTOR: It's no good, we can't shift it.
LENA: Pavel, where's Turlough?
PAVEL: Took him. Took your Tardis too.
DOCTOR: That truck.
LENA: Pavel, who did this?
PAVEL: Sleepers. (groans) We got close. Spooked them.
LENA: Doctor, we have to get him out of here.
DOCTOR: I don't think we can.
PAVEL: Lena. Beautiful Lena.
LENA: I'm here, Pavel.
PAVEL: Look after Grandma, yes? Tell her I was right about everything.
LENA: I will.
PAVEL: Love you, Lena.
LENA: Oh, Pavel.
(Pavel dies.)
DOCTOR: These walls are going to collapse, Lena, we must go.
LENA: Yes.
DOCTOR: Well, come on!

DOCTOR: A waste. Such a horrible pointless waste. We're going to get to the heart of this before anyone else gets hurt.
LENA: Look, over there, on the skyline. No matter where we go, it's always there, watching us.
DOCTOR: The Somnus Tower. It's an astounding piece of architecture, isn't it? Difficult to believe that something so beautiful conceals such malignance.
LENA: The Sleepers are a cancer, Doctor. They corrupt everything around them.
DOCTOR: Well, that won't do.

SEO: Have you ever seen a Time Lord die, Qel?
QEL: I usually leave the executions to my subordinates.
SEO: It is not a peaceful death, especially for those with incarnations yet unused. Perishing over and over, different bodies regenerating and re-birthing, only to die screaming. Quite the most horrific agony, I would imagine, and yet, it will still not be enough.
QEL: Look at us, Seo. In millennia we have not changed at all. It is still our hate that keeps us warm after all these years.
SEO: Hate is all they left us with. The only kindling that we have to burn. Are those doubts you're hiding away?
QEL: Of course not. You peck and snipe at me with every word, searching for some chink in my resolve. There is none. I am as staunch today as I was twenty years ago, when you threw me back into this mire of ignorance.
SEO: You went of your own accord.
QEL: Only because you gave me no choice. You see? We follow old patterns. The same arguments, the same conflicts.
SEO: Then end it if you can. These animals are still decades away from developing the power sources we require to trigger the evolution.
QEL: Yes, but the Time Lords are not. Imagine it, Seo. With Gallifreyan science in our grasp, it would be hours, not years, until the rise of the Singularity.
SEO: You would dirty yourself with their technology, after what they did to us?
QEL: Oh, be realistic. This is the end of our species, Seo. We cannot afford to bear such wounded principles. The sweet irony that it is the Doctor who will aid us.
SEO: He is disgustingly righteous. He will die before he helps us.
QEL: What do I care? He is not what I require.
CORD [OC]: Great Qel, we have returned to the Tower. The primary target was recovered as well as the Doctor's companion.
QEL: Bring the specimens to the lab level.
SEO: I underestimated you. You planned this all along. You've been waiting for him all these years.
QEL: Days into weeks, into months, into years, Seo. Marking time, and watching, always watching. After the fire at the clinic, I came to understand who he was, what he represented. The Doctor is as much a slave to his nature as are to ours, and I knew then he would come back. Time, for once, was on our side.
SEO: Singularity. It will be glorious. And we shall ride at the godhead.

TURLOUGH: Get off me. Let me go, you lunatics.
CORD: Happy to oblige. Put him down.
(Thud.)
CORD: Bring the time ship up. Lock the conduction frame in place around it.
TURLOUGH: What are you doing to the Tardis?
CORD: Tardis? Is that what you call it? Don't concern yourself, boy. It's beyond your control now.
TURLOUGH: You're wasting your time if you think you'll be able to get aboard. You can't just blow a hole in it.
CORD: Great Ones, may I present the Tardis.
SEO: Oh. How ordinary. I expected something more dramatic.
QEL: Appearances can be deceiving, Seo. Is it ready?
CORD: The phase array is prepared. We may apply force to the time ship at your discretion.
QEL: Do so.
(Power builds. Tardis engines sound.)
TURLOUGH: Stop it. Stop it, you're hurting it.
CORD: It's just a machine.
TURLOUGH: It's alive.
CORD: The discharge was insufficient to induce the required reaction.
QEL: Reset at a higher level.
TURLOUGH: You're torturing the ship.
SEO: So you're the Doctor's friend. Did you harm him, Cord?
CORD: Nothing permanent.
SEO: Good. He's fit and strong. I think he deserves the gift of a true name.
QEL: Yes. An excellent decision.
TURLOUGH: What are you talking about?
CORD: With respect, are you sure this one is suitable? There are anomalous factors in his aura scan. There might be... complications.
QEL: Primitives are primitives. He's close enough for displacement.
TURLOUGH: I'm not going to become one of your zealots. You won't brainwash me like you did with Alexi. I won't let you take my mind.
SEO: (laughs) Your mind? Why would we ever want that? No, it is your flesh and blood that we shall take. You will have the honour of becoming a host for my kindred, just as the Korolev boy was.
TURLOUGH: What are you?
SEO: The future.
QEL: Cord? Begin the transfer.
CORD: Psi-gate ready. The conduit to Ember is open, Great One.
QEL: Execute.
(Turlough screams.)

DOCTOR: It'll take hours to reach the Tower in this traffic. The Metro will get us there. Ow. Get us...
LENA: Doctor? Doctor, speak to me.
DOCTOR: The pain. Oh no.
LENA: Doctor, what is the matter?
DOCTOR: Lena, the Tardis. For a brief moment I felt a terrible agony.
LENA: Is something wrong with the blue box?
DOCTOR: We've both been through a lot together, the old girl and I. Sometimes I can almost hear her whisper in my... oh!
(Distortion.)
LENA: Perhaps we should rest for a moment.
DOCTOR: No. No, you can't see it. It's happening again, the time fracture, it's forming. Look at the Tower.
LENA: It's glowing. What is that sound? I can hear it inside my skull.
(Distortion ends.)
DOCTOR: The people. They've just stopped.
LENA: Like statues, frozen. Oh, my head.
DOCTOR: The Singularity. It's beginning to form. Lena? Can you hear me?
LENA: Doctor?
DOCTOR: Lena! Concentrate on my voice, listen to me. It's the Sleepers. They're broadcasting their influence over the city. You must resist it.
LENA: Can't.
DOCTOR: Wait, wait. This worked before. See if it will again.
LENA: Oh ... what ... what did you do?
DOCTOR: The Univarius created a jamming field. It's quite weak, so stay close.
LENA: Look at them all. The whole city has been silenced.

DOCTOR: Qel's plans are more advanced than I gave her credit for. They're taking things to the next level, putting Moscow under their control. The rest of the world will follow.

LENA: All life on Earth sharing one consciousness? Is that even possible?

DOCTOR: There are dozens of lifeforms that have done it. Link enough psyches using close proximity and you pass the point of critical mass. Flesh becomes energy, mind breaks free of matter. Instant evolution, just add water.

LENA: But why now?

DOCTOR: Things are going to change for Earth in the next few years, Lena. New technologies arise, space travel gets easier. Humans will start colonising other worlds and then they'll be spread too thin to create a Singularity. These are the last days of Earth as Mankind's cradle. That's why the Sleepers are here. Just enough minds in just the right place.

LENA: Listen. It's as still as the grave. Oh. I can hear them.

DOCTOR: Their power is increasing. Come on. The Metro station entrance is just over there. It might attenuate the signal if we're underground, for a little while at least.

LENA: I can feel them, glowing with my form.

DOCTOR: Stay with me.

VOICES: Lena. Lena.

DOCTOR: Down these stairs, quickly.

LENA: Can't you hear them? Why aren't you being drawn into it?

DOCTOR: The singularity affects every thinking consciousness native to this planet, Lena. My mind, well, let's just say it has a distinctly different flavour. This way. The automated trains are still running. Mind the gap.

LENA: Made it just, just barely. Doctor, I can't hold on. The voices. It's too much for me to fight.

DOCTOR: Wait. If I can just adjust the signal. Just have to boost the gain.

LENA: I can feel it, slipping away. Thoughts are fluid, merging.

DOCTOR: Lena, you and I are the only free minds in the whole of the city. You must be strong.

LENA: I don't want to be strong any more. Alexi. Maybe he's in there somewhere. We can be together. Babushka.

DOCTOR: Lena? Lena! Oh no. Just me then. Oh well, suppose I've played worse odds in my time.

VOICES: Doctor. Doctor.

DOCTOR: Hello? Would this be the entire population of Moscow I'm addressing, or is someone else in the driving-seat? Well? Seo? Oh look, this is where I get off. Lovely talking to you, but if you'll excuse me.

VOICES: Stop him. Stop him.

TEV: Is there no end to my indignities? Once more I must minister to this repulsive process. Xen's transfer is almost complete. You, attend me.

ALEXI: All right.

TURLOUGH: No! Nerves, on fire.

TEV: Silence, animal. Cease your repellent bleating.

TURLOUGH: What have you freaks done to me?

TEV: Get back! The stench of your psyche is revolting.

TURLOUGH: Tell me or I'll choke it out of you.

TEV: Learn your place, primitive.

(Turlough screams.)

TEV: Take this filth from my sight before I punish you as well.

ALEXI: Come on, friend. I have you.

TURLOUGH: I feel so strange.

ALEXI: The energy sting will wear off in a moment. Believe me, you got off lightly just then. I'm Alexi. When did the Sleepers take you?

TURLOUGH: Alexi? Alexi Korolev?

ALEXI: Yes. Do I know you?

TURLOUGH: No, but your sister? We've been helping her to search for you.

ALEXI: I'm sorry you had to come here to do it. Lena, she's all right?

TURLOUGH: I think so. I'm Turlough, by the way. Where is here?

NATALIE: The planet Ember, beyond the edge of what once was the Orion arm in the Spinward Deeps.

TURLOUGH: That's not much help.

NATALIE: Where we are is unimportant. When, that is a different matter.

TURLOUGH: I don't think I'm going to like the answer.

NATALIE: This far into the future, numbers become meaningless. There are trillions of years between Ember and our Earth. Our abductors have abandoned us here with a ringside seat for the heat death of the Universe.

TURLOUGH: I'd like to go home now, please.

ALEXI: Those things, whatever the Sleepers really are, they've turned out our minds and kept our bodies for themselves. They use us like shells, trading our flesh for theirs.

NATALIE: In return for a gift, they bequeath us this nightmarish agglomeration of rusted iron and meat. Their husks.

TURLOUGH: So back in Moscow, one of those horrible creatures is walking around wearing my skin? And look at us. These bodies are weak and feeble, patched together with scrap metal. Hardly a fair exchange.

ALEXI: You're taking this better than I did. It was weeks before I could cope.

TURLOUGH: Weeks? But you were only taken a day ago.

NATALIE: Time moves differently on Ember, in fits and starts. The laws of causality are decaying just like everything else.

TURLOUGH: You're Natalia Pushkin, aren't you? How long have you been here?

NATALIE: It seems like forever.

TURLOUGH: And in all that time, have you ever tried to fight back, to escape?

NATALIE: New arrivals always ask that. Escape to where, Turlough? There are no walls in our prison. This is the last beacon of life in the whole of creation. To leave is to die.

TURLOUGH: And if you do nothing, when the stars go out you'll die anyway.

ALEXI: I tried to defy them at first, but Tev and the others are too strong.

TURLOUGH: Tev? Oh right, him, yeah. He had a, what do you call it, a sting.

NATALIE: They tap energy from their psyche. We can't resist them. In concert the Sleepers have the will to dominate human minds.

TURLOUGH: *Human* minds. Human minds from Earth, right? But what about other ones?

NATALIE: What do you mean?

TURLOUGH: I think I might have an advantage.

DOCTOR: Right, let's review. Tardis stolen, Turlough abducted, Lena subsumed into a psychic amalgam of fourteen million Muscovites. Yes, I think that's a fair enough evaluation of the state of play.

VOICE: Doctor. Doctor.

DOCTOR: You can keep trying, but I'm afraid you'll find my cerebral structure to be quite resistant to absorption, thank you! Time for the last inning, then.

(Knocking on door.)

DOCTOR: Hello. This is the Doctor. I imagine I'm expected. I'm here to see a man about an invasion. Hello? (Door opens.)

CORD: You will not resist, Time Lord.

DOCTOR: Actually, I rather thought I might. Be a good fellow and take me to your leader.

DOCTOR [OC]: Please?

SEO: His conceit is unbelievable.

QEL: We underestimate him at our peril.

SEO: If it were one of his later incarnations, perhaps I might agree. But this? This is one of his more passive personas.

QEL: Our date on him is sketchy at best.

SEO: We know enough to blame him.

(Door opens.)

CORD: The alien has surrendered itself.

DOCTOR: Ah. Here we all are.

QEL: Oh, Doctor. How nice to see you again. Your aspect does little justice to your reputation.

DOCTOR: Hmm. Was that an insult? I'm not quite sure.

SEO: Are you going to stand there and trade quips with this betrayer? He should be on his knees begging for his life.

DOCTOR: I had something else in mind. I've come to ask for my ball back, in a manner of speaking.

SEO: You'd like your property returned, Doctor, is that it? I'm afraid your companion has already been put to better use.

DOCTOR: One man has already died tonight, and that is one too many. I know what you're doing and you're wasting your time. You couldn't possibly find the power to create your Singularity on this planet.

QEL: Quite right, Doctor. But fortunately for us, your vessel has provided a perfect source of energy.

DOCTOR: The Tardis won't give up her secrets to you, Qel, she's very choosy about the company she keeps.

SEO: We don't need its secrets. We just need its pain.

DOCTOR: What do you mean?

QEL: Show him. Open the power core shields.

(Tardis engines pulsing.)

DOCTOR: The Tardis. No. You'll destroy her.

QEL: Destroy it? Nothing could be further from my intent. Your time machine holds the key to the time vortex

at its heart. Near-infinite energy, Doctor.

SEO: It was just a matter of forcing the craft to dematerialise. Tapping the release of chronometric particles in that instant is more than enough to power the creation of our Singularity.

DOCTOR: You've trapped her at the Event Horizon, caught her like a fly in amber. The ship will bleed to death if you don't release it. You're toying with forces beyond your control. You're killing my ship!

[Part Four]

QEL: Cord, subdue the Doctor before he attempts any theatrical heroics.

CORD: Your will, Great One.

DOCTOR: Ow!

QEL: I could torture you in a hundred ways, Doctor. Flay you, burn you, stab you. But none of those would cut as deep as watching your greatest failure unfold before your eyes.

SEO: I sense it. The city is ours now completely. Phase Two has been achieved.

DOCTOR: You can't do this. You're going to obliterate the future.

QEL: Precisely. And humankind will thank us for it.

TURLOUGH: Desolation. I think that word must have been invented to describe this place.

NATALIA: In its own way, Ember has a bleak sort of beauty. An endless vista of ruined stone and corroded metal from horizon to horizon.

ALEXI: People must have lived here once. There must have been life, real life, living and breathing, once upon a time .

NATALIA: Our captors dwindle with each passing year, more and more of them migrating into the past. But some spoke about this world. It was an outpost for them, somewhere to watch the galaxies beyond this one for signs of intelligence.

TURLOUGH: An observatory.

NATALIA: I suppose so. Billions of years ago these skies would have been lit by spirals and whorls of star colour. Can you imagine it? Pools of sands, vast as creation.

TURLOUGH: And now there's nothing. Just the dark going on for ever.

ALEXI: No wonder they wanted to escape this place. If we were them, would we do any different?

NATALIA: Atrocities are often committed in the name of survival.

TURLOUGH: Don't excuse what the Sleepers are doing. I'm not dying for them.

ALEXI: They hate us so much, you can almost taste it in the air.

TURLOUGH: Then we should hate them right back. Apathy, that's their weapon. The Sleepers seed it like a virus. Look at these people. They're already broken.

NATALIA: It is not apathy, Turlough. It's acceptance. We have no way to fight them.

TURLOUGH: You're wrong. Alexi said it. They hate us. They hate the stink of our minds.

NATALIA: We are distasteful to them. Tev and his kindred are patch telepaths. In close proximity, they are repulsed by our thoughts.

TURLOUGH: So just being around us makes them ill. Why don't we take that and choke them on it?

ALEXI: We have nothing to lose by trying.

NATALIA: They have punishments worse than death. When the mind is no barrier, the capacity for cruelty is unspeakable.

TURLOUGH: Help us, Natalia. Come on. Dare to hope, just this once.

NATALIA: What makes you so sure you'll succeed where others have failed?

TURLOUGH: I suppose you could say I have a friend on the other side of the fence.

DOCTOR: Do you know how many of your kind have tried this sort of thing? You're as doomed to failure as the rest of them.

SEO: Our kind? You have no comprehension of what we are, Time Lord.

QEL: If we present such a poor threat, then why are you here?

DOCTOR: I'm just trying to reduce the amount of collateral damage. After all, there's no such thing as a bloodless invasion, is there?

QEL: Quite so. Cord, energise the psi-gate.

CORD: As you command.

DOCTOR: He's much less disagreeable in that state, isn't he? Pity you won't be able to keep them docile forever. Humans have a terrible habit of asserting their free will.

SEO: In the glory of Singularity there is only one will, Doctor. The will of the totality, pure and immediate.

QEL: The Tardis shows some signs of stress, but nothing that should concern us. For the first time we will be able to bring our kindred from Ember not in piecemeal, but as one great exodus. You see, Seo? I have been proven right, at last.

SEO: Of course.

DOCTOR: It's quite a feat, siphoning off the raw flux from the Tardis's central column, but in the end what will

it gain you? Turn all of Earth's population into non-corporeal energy and then hope they'll thank you for it.
QEL: We will join the Singularity, every one of us. These primitives will need guidance, and I will provide it.
DOCTOR: Oh yes, and the very universe itself will tremble before my might, et cetera, et cetera. Pardon me if I've heard all those notes played before. The tune becomes rather flat after a few repetitions.
SEO: Mock all you want, Gallifreyan, but know this. The godhead is coming, and we will be the masters of it.
DOCTOR: And what gives you the right? Explain the divine edict that permits you to come from whatever backwater of Space-Time you hide in, and invade this race's world.
SEO: What right? Curse you, Doctor. We have every right.
QEL: You labour under a misapprehension. We, what you call the Sleepers, have more right to be on Earth than you ever have, alien.
SEO: We are humans, Doctor. We are the last descendants of Mankind, the final remnants of this planet's children.
DOCTOR: You're invading your own past.
QEL: We flee entropy, the end of Time. A handful of lives, all that remains of a species that once mastered countless worlds.
SEO: Our civilisation lost, huddling in bitter ruins, sentenced to death by you.
DOCTOR: Me?
QEL: Your kind. We were betrayed and cast out by the Time Lords.
SEO: They knew the end of the universe was approaching. With their great power they opened a gate to another realm, to safety.
QEL: They escaped with all the life they deemed worthy.
DOCTOR: But not humanity.
QEL: You left us to perish, Doctor.

TURLOUGH: This must be where rust comes to die.
ALEXI: Look at this place. It's like a mad scientist's scrap yard.
NATALIA: You are not far wrong. There are hundreds of similar chambers inside these ruins.
TURLOUGH: Hundreds?
NATALIA: Our captors use them as receiving stations for their displacements.
TURLOUGH: You mean people like us.
ALEXI: I don't want to do this. If they catch us inside, the Sleepers will sting us to death.
NATALIA: I have seen them kill like hornets in a swarm. They combine their energies and attack all together.
TURLOUGH: If they can bring our consciousnesses here, then we *must* be able to make the trip back. All we need to do is find the right switch to flip.
ALEXI: You make it sound easy.
NATALIA: Tev controls the displacements from the Core.
TURLOUGH: This way?
NATALIA: It is the last source of energy in the universe, Turlough. Nothing on Ember is so highly prized.
TURLOUGH: Stay or go. Live or die. I for one know what choice I'm making. Alexi?
ALEXI: Okay. I'd rather die trying than just fade away into nothingness.
TURLOUGH: I don't intend to do any kind of dying at all.
NATALIA: Follow me. This is what keeps us here. Look at it. The sickly light spilling from the core. It's not meant to exist in our reality.
ALEXI: My vision slides away. It's like I can't even hold the shape of it in my eyes. Ooo! Just looking at it makes my flesh crawl.
TURLOUGH: You don't have any flesh, Alexi. As long as we stay trapped in these walking piles of wreckage, none of us have.
NATALIA: What do you think you can do, Turlough?
TURLOUGH: Do? I'm sure if the Doctor were here he'd have some clever idea. But me? I'm just going to hit it until it breaks.
NATALIA: A rather ruthless solution.
TURLOUGH: That's me all over.
TEV: Stay where you are, animals!
ALEXI: They've found us.
TEV: You filthy degenerate savages. You were warned not to enter here. I will teach you not to defy us.
NATALIA: Tev, no!
TEV: Silence!
(Natalia screams.)
TURLOUGH: You'll pay for that.
TEV: And what are you going to do with that, creature?
NATALIA: Turlough, put down the rod. You can't hurt them.
TEV: Go on. Strike me. I dare you.
TURLOUGH: I wasn't thinking of hitting you with it.

ALEXI: The Core.

TEV: No!

(Smashing.)

TURLOUGH: One more should do the trick.

TEV: Noooooooooo!

TURLOUGH: Can't move!

TEV: You stupid weak snivelling little insect. Did you really think you could smash your way to freedom? Kneel.

TURLOUGH: No! Ah!

ALEXI: It's inside my head. The noise.

TEV: We are Somnus. We will not be disobeyed .

DOCTOR: The scope of what you're planning. It's all about revenge, isn't it? Vengeance for something that won't happen for billions of years.

SEO: It *has* happened, Doctor. We have seen it. Worlds and stars fading into lifeless orbs of matter. Art and culture and knowledge vanishing, never to be recovered, all because the Time Lords deemed us undeserving.

QEL: We've always wondered if you knew, if you understood what your brethren would do when the end came, and yet you did nothing to warn us.

DOCTOR: You must know I would have no part in that.

QEL: Are we like pets to you, Doctor? Is that all humankind was? Some sort of experiment? A toy with which to amuse yourself?

DOCTOR: No. I've saved this world from destruction more times than I've had hot dinners.

QEL: Did you like playing the hero? All your much-vaunted stewardship of Earth comes to nothing when you stand by and let its people die.

DOCTOR: You can't hold me accountable for events that haven't occurred yet.

SEO: Oh, but we can, and we will. The only reason we have not killed you out of hand is that our kindred would feel cheated of the chance to end you themselves.

QEL: Once the Singularity is complete, and we have merged with the unity of it, we shall share in the pleasure of punishing you.

XEN: A fitting end for someone our race trusted so much. All of Mankind will be your executioner.

DOCTOR: Turlough. But not Turlough. I see. You're just using his body. So, is he there now, on Ember, wasting away in your place?

SEO: Welcome to Earth, Xen. You have recovered from the displacement?

XEN: Indeed. This organic form is odd, but I will adapt.

DOCTOR: Do keep him in good order, won't you? I'm sure he'll want himself back in one piece.

XEN: I stand ready to assist in the great work.

QEL: Monitor the energy projector. It is essential we maintain the stability of the Schumann resonance.

DOCTOR: Look, there must be some other way. Turning humans into a godlike over-mind will critically unbalance the continuum. Your race isn't supposed to achieve instrumentality overnight, it's destined to fight tooth and nail for every achievement. That's what makes you so special. That's the human factor. Discard that and you destroy everything you are or ever will be. You can't do this.

XEN: Watch us.

DOCTOR: Nothing lives forever. No civilisation is everlasting. All things die. Even you.

QEL: Spoken like a true Time Lord.

SEO: We do now what we have done since we crawled from the primordial swamps, Doctor. What humans do best. We survive.

DOCTOR: No matter what the cost?

QEL: We have nothing to lose, and the universe to gain if we succeed.

DOCTOR: How selfless of you, Qel. And once I'm dead, and you've no doubt eradicated Gallifrey and the whole constellation of Kasterborous in a fit of pique, what then?

QEL: I will guide the Singularity to forge a new future.

DOCTOR: I? A moment ago you said we. Which is it? Surely the whole point of a group consciousness is that one of you can't be in charge of it.

SEO: Your attempts at divisiveness are pitiful.

DOCTOR: Of course they are. After all, you and Qel seem to be such good friends.

QEL: The conduit is registering a distortion. Something is in error.

XEN: This primitive technology's barely adequate.

SEO: No. The distortion is elsewhere. On Ember.

DOCTOR: Turlough. What are you up to?

QEL: Compensate for the error, and proceed.

SEO: Is that wise? If there is an issue with...

QEL: Do not second-guess me, Seo. I have prepared for every eventuality.

SEO: Take care, Qel. If your ego overwhelms your good sense, I may find it necessary to assume a more direct role.

DOCTOR: It's a pleasure to see two great minds working in such harmony.

ALEXI: Ah! Make it stop.

NATALIA: Tev, please.

TEV: How could such beings as we have ever evolved from worthless mongrels like you?

TURLOUGH: That's where you're wrong.

TEV: Your mind. The patterns are different. Alien.

TURLOUGH: I'm not like the other boys.

TEV: No matter. You'll perish as easily as the rest of this cattle. I've never killed an alien before. How does one of your kind die, Turlough? It'll be an interesting experiment.

NATALIA: Stop it. Not again. I won't let you kill any more.

ALEXI: Natalia, stay back.

NATALIA: Turlough.

TEV: Do not touch me.

TURLOUGH: Natalia.

NATALIA: Turlough.

TEV: No!

ALEXI: That sound. I can hear it inside my thoughts. Oh God, the pain, the despair. It's from Natalia's mind. I can see her memories.

TEV: Get out of my head!

TURLOUGH: She's turning her own pain against Tev.

TEV: Ah! Stop it. Stop the discord.

ALEXI: The Sleepers can't handle the psychic fallout.

TURLOUGH: That's it, isn't it, Tev? The all-powerful Somnus can't tolerate raw human emotions, can you? You're so cold and remote, you're so inhuman, you've forgotten how to feel pain and passion.

TEV: We will destroy you.

TURLOUGH: I'm more human than you'll ever be. Look. Look in my mind and see it.

TEV: No!

TURLOUGH: All the friends I've lost, torn from my home world and my family. All the pain and torment, the murder and destruction I've seen. Come on, Tev. Share it with me.

NATALIA: Yes, that's it. Join me.

TEV: No! Stop. I beg you.

TURLOUGH: Show them your pain, Alexi. Let them see it.

ALEXI: My mother. She died by inches, each day worse than the last. I thought I would never survive without help. I had Lena, and now you took that from me as well!

TEV: No...!

TURLOUGH: That's what it means to be human.

(Explosion.)

DOCTOR: My, what an interesting contraption this is.

SEO: Touch that device and you die.

DOCTOR: Oh dear. That can't be a good thing, can it?

CORD: The conduit is...

XEN: There's a malfunction on Ember. The power core there is destabilising.

SEO: Show me.

QEL: No. We are too close to Phase Three. We cannot fail now.

SEO: Xen, is the city still ours?

XEN: Confirmed. However, if the link to Ember is severed...

DOCTOR: Then all your grand plans will be in ruins. How sad.

SEO: Do not test my patience, alien.

DOCTOR: Why ever not? After all, you're planning on executing me anyway, aren't you?

QEL: It is imperative that the resonance remains stable. We cannot progress to Phase Three totality without it.

SEO: I have a solution, Qel, do not fear. Cord?

CORD: Yes, Great... One.

DOCTOR: You're losing him, Seo, him and everyone else in Moscow.

SEO: Open the psi-gate.

XEN: We are not ready.

SEO: Open it to me! I will merge with the Singularity and take direct control of it from within.

QEL: What? No, I will not allow it.

SEO: Do not be irrational, Qel. This is the only way. If the conduit fails, so will the Singularity. Once we have

Earth , we can cast off our ties to Ember, but not before.

DOCTOR: Are you willing to turn over mastery of your life's work to Seo?

XEN: Be silent.

QEL: The Gallifreyan makes a good point. If anyone should assume control it should be I, I...

SEO: You? You lack the strength, Qel. Force of will is needed here.

QEL: How dare you.

XEN: There is no time for this bickering.

DOCTOR: What if all this was a plan, I wonder. Would Seo engineer some sort of crisis on Ember just so he could position himself to take control?

SEO: Doctor, you have tested me for the last time.

QEL: Are you afraid he speaks the truth?

(Seo strangles the Doctor.)

SEO: Qel, this creature is manipulating us. He seeks to turn us against one another.

QEL: And yet his words seem all too believable. We have detested each other for so long, Seo, our race has no other emotions left. You cannot deny that one of us would do anything to destroy the other.

SEO: I will not deny it. But this great work dwarfs our petty rivalry. This is survival.

QEL: Yes. Yes, it is. But by my design. Cord, restrain him.

CORD: Yes, Qel.

SEO: What are you doing? Let go of me.

DOCTOR: Oh, that's better.

QEL: I have not laboured in this archaic time, in this desert of barbarity for so long just to allow you to sweep in and take the glory of our race's greatest victory from me.

SEO: You fool. This is just what he wants.

DOCTOR: No. Actually, what I wanted was to distract you long enough to get over to this device you were so protective of.

QEL: The psi-gate. Don't let him touch it.

DOCTOR: Too late.

SEO: Stop himmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm

(Echoing.)

DOCTOR: Ah. So this is Singularity. Psionic phase displacement, as I thought. Now, let's see. Hello? Hello? Anyone? Turlough? I know you're out there.

TURLOUGH: Doctor?

DOCTOR: Turlough. The real thing this time, splendid.

TURLOUGH: I can hear you in my mind.

DOCTOR: Across Time and Space, yes, thanks to the conduit. It won't last long though, so we need to be quick.

ALEXI: Whose voice is that?

DOCTOR: Alexi Korolev, I presume. Delighted to er meet you, in a manner of speaking.

ALEXI: Natalia?

NATALIA: Still here.

TURLOUGH: Doctor, we have to get back.

DOCTOR: You read my mind. Well, actually we're all touching the Singularity, so technically we're all reading each other's minds. Gets a bit complicated, really.

ALEXI: How do we return to Earth?

DOCTOR: I've released the control the Sleepers have over the psi-gate. Just listen to my voice, follow the sound of it. It will open the way for the rest of the people they abducted.

TURLOUGH: I hear it. I can see the path.

ALEXI: I can't see anything. Help me. I can't see anything.

LENA: Alexi?

ALEXI: Lena?

DOCTOR: Yes, of course. Like calls to like. Every mind the Sleepers affected is here with us.

TURLOUGH: Lena, call to him.

LENA: Alexi, come to me. Come home.

ALEXI: I, I can see something, in your mind. Mamma? Oh Lena, why didn't you tell me?

LENA: I was afraid, Alexi. I was afraid I would lose you, that you would hate me. I'm so sorry.

ALEXI: I understand what you did. You will never lose me. It will never happen. Hold on. We are coming back.

TURLOUGH: Natalia? Are you there?

NATALIA: Go back, Turlough. I'm following in a moment.

CORD: The sound. The voices are fading. I can't hear them any more.

XEN: The psi-gate is disintegrating. The Singularity cannot hold.

QEL: What have you done, Time Lord? What have you done?
DOCTOR: I'm terribly sorry, but I think I may have broken your toy.
QEL: No. You loathsome meddler. You have ruined my perfect work.
DOCTOR: Well, you really shouldn't leave these things lying around.
SEO: What, what is happening to me? In my mind, another voice.
DOCTOR: Yes, that will be original owner on his way back to reclaim his property, I should imagine. You're all about to be served with an eviction notice.
XEN: Great Qel, please help me.
QEL: Get away from me, you primitive savage.
(Slap!.)
DOCTOR: Perhaps if you'd kept your monumental arrogance under control, you might have stood a chance of succeeding, but then, you were too busy being old and bitter. You've lost, and now the ancestors you so callously abused are going to throw you back where you belong.
QEL: I'll tear your hearts out with my bare hands!
DOCTOR: Who's the savage now, Qel? Those old animal instincts are still in your belly, deep down inside.
XEN: The unity is shattered.

LENA: Alexi? Alexi! We are free. We are free.

SEO: The Singularity. Gone. Curse you, Qel. You have brought us to this!
DOCTOR: You should be proud. Despite all the human qualities you've lost, you've still retained the worst, namely your conceit and brutality.
QEL: We can still win. Your interference cannot overcome the will of the Somnus. We will sever the conduit to Ember. The minds of those we have taken will be destroyed, scattered across the time stream.
DOCTOR: They don't deserve to die.
QEL: Your wretched moral posturing has doomed us. The death of your friends is the least I can do to repay you. Xen, close the conduit. He will not wish to injure the husk of his companion.
XEN: Yeah. Yes. Yes, I. No!
DOCTOR: Turlough? Come on, I know you're in there. Fight it, fight it.
TURLOUGH: Get out of my mind!
DOCTOR: That's the spirit.
TURLOUGH: Doctor?
DOCTOR: Welcome home.
TURLOUGH: I almost can't believe it.
SEO: All our plans, all our future, gone. Destroyed. Damn you, Qel.
QEL: No! *You* are the cause. Why could you have not let me complete my work? You had to try and steal it from me.
DOCTOR: Look at yourselves. Your scheme is coming down around your ears, and you're still at each other's throats.
TURLOUGH: Doctor, we have to get out of here. This place is going to blow apart.
DOCTOR: Not without Lena's brother. Not without Natalia.
SEO: This was our last hope, Doctor. A final gambit for existence against a cruel and ruthless universe. But you have taken it from us. No! I will not go back! (thud)
TURLOUGH: Alexi? Are you in there?
ALEXI: Did we make it?
DOCTOR: All the way. Turlough, get him out of here.
TURLOUGH: Right.
NATALIA: No escape.
DOCTOR: Natalia?
NATALIA: Yes. No. Trapped. Can't let her flee, Doctor. Qel will destroy.
QEL: Let me go, you savage. Argh.
NATALIA: I won't let her return to Ember. She has to be stopped.
DOCTOR: Natalia, the psi-gate mechanism is collapsing. When it does the energy release will destroy this entire building.
QEL: What is this? (laughs) Mercy for the vanquished foe? How high-handed of you. Bwahahaha!
NATALIA: I will hold her here, Doctor. Run away. Get away.
QEL: Yes. Go away, Time Lord. Run along. I will not perish inside this foul sack of meat.
DOCTOR: She won't let your mind return to Ember, Qel. This is the end for you.
QEL: My hate is eternal. There is no end. You'll carry it with you, Doctor. You've done what you swore you would not. You are responsible for the final death of Man! Take your victory. I hope you can stand to shoulder it.
NATALIA: Go. Go, Doctor. I release you. Go to your ship. I forgive you.
DOCTOR: I'm sorry.

(Tardis engines whining.)

DOCTOR: Yes - yes, I know it hurts, just hold on, dear old girl, just a little longer.

TURLOUGH: Doctor, come on!

DOCTOR: Get away. Run, as fast as you can.

ALEXI: But Natalia and your Tardis. They're still inside there.

DOCTOR: She's staying behind.

TURLOUGH: You left the ship inside?

DOCTOR: Turlough, for once don't argue with me. Just do what I tell you and run.

QEL: Come, then. The final death at last. An end to the procession of proxy bodies and synthetic existence. Do you hear me, time ship? Release it. Release me.

XEN: Great Qel, what's going on? The Singularity. You said we would be gods. I thought we were going to evolve.

QEL: And so we will. Change and evolution. Death and rebirth.

(Explosion.)

DOCTOR: Get down!

TURLOUGH: Doctor, the Tardis!

ALEXI: Oh. Where am I?

TURLOUGH: Take it easy, Alexi. We're in a hospital tent. You were hit by a piece of masonry. You've been out quite a few hours.

ALEXI: I feel sick, like I was turned inside out.

TURLOUGH: Me too. Side-effects from the psi-gate, I think.

ALEXI: Oh. For a moment there I was hoping all of that had been some sort of insane dream.

TURLOUGH: You can believe that if you like.

ALEXI: Yes, but that wouldn't show any respect for Natalia's sacrifice, would it? Where is the Doctor?

TURLOUGH: Doing what he does. Helping people. Worrying about others instead of himself.

ALEXI: You don't sound like you approve.

TURLOUGH: We're stuck here now, he and I. With the Tardis gone, that's it. Trapped on Earth .

ALEXI: Is that so bad?

TURLOUGH: I just wish that he could leave things alone once in a while. None of this would have happened if we had just minded our own business.

ALEXI: So you're saying he shouldn't put his life on the line for others?

TURLOUGH: Well, sort of, but...

ALEXI: Because that's what you did on Ember for me. Maybe you're more like him than you think.

TURLOUGH: I did that for my own sake as well as yours. I was saving myself.

ALEXI: Perhaps that's what the Doctor is doing. Saving himself every time he saves someone else.

DOCTOR: The problem with looking after your own skin and forgetting the rest of us is, if you only ensure your own survival, soon there's no one else left but you. Terribly lonely way to go through life. Look who I found at the despatch tent.

ALEXI: Lena.

LENA: Alexi! I was so scared I would never see you again. Turlough, Doctor. Thank you so much for what you have done for me. I don't know what I can do to repay you.

DOCTOR: Just live well, both of you, and look after Pavel's grandmother.

LENA: Of course.

ALEXI: Thank you, my friends.

DOCTOR: Turlough, let's give them a moment alone, shall we?

TURLOUGH: Look at them. Look how easy it is for them to care for each other, even after everything that's happened. Sometimes I think I'll never have anything like that.

DOCTOR: I assume you *have* family, somewhere out there?

TURLOUGH: Sort of. But now no way to reach them again.

DOCTOR: Oh, ye of little faith. Care for some hot tea? Going to be cold today.

TURLOUGH: What about Lena and Alexi? Are we just going to slip away and leave them?

DOCTOR: Yes. Better like this. Less awkward.

NEWSREADER: The sun has risen this morning on a city in the state of shock. In what the National Police Directorate is describing as unprovoked and ruthless attack, a terrorist group detonated a bomb inside the headquarters of the Somnus Foundation, a New Age religious group. It is believed that this was a part of a two-pronged attack, involving the release of hallucinogenic compounds into the Moscow water supply. Victims reported traumatic visions and mass hysteria. Although the effects appear to have been purely temporary, mobile medical units have been deployed throughout the area to deal with the crisis. While the

perpetrators of this terrible act have yet to be identified, rumours of zone separatist involvement are already circulating in the law enforcement community. Reporting live for Moscow Nine News, this is Micha Zeita .

DOCTOR: Two cups, yes. Thank you so much. Keep the change.

(Drinking tea.)

TURLOUGH: Mmm. You know, I think I'm developing a taste for this stuff.

DOCTOR: Let's walk.

TURLOUGH: You see those children playing on the swings? You wouldn't believe they had a building blow up near here last night.

DOCTOR: The young are often far more resilient than their elders would give them credit for.

TURLOUGH: So.

DOCTOR: So?

TURLOUGH: What do we do now? Two time travellers, stranded and alone on mid 21st century Earth. Do we settle in and wait for the next invasion? Be like Pavel and keep watching the skies?

DOCTOR: Well, for starters we're not the only time travellers or aliens for that matter on Earth in this time period. There are dozens of non-terrestrials scattered about this planet. In fact, there's one over there.

TURLOUGH: What? Where?

DOCTOR: And we're certainly not stranded. Do you know what time it is?

TURLOUGH: No. Where's this alien?

DOCTOR: Over there. Tall fellow, blue hat. Where did I put that watch?

TURLOUGH: He seems quite human to me.

DOCTOR: Look in the mirror. Ah, here we are. Perfect. Might step a couple of feet to the left if I were you.

TURLOUGH: Why?

(The Tardis materialises.)

TURLOUGH: Ah, right.

DOCTOR: Safe as houses, as they say.

TURLOUGH: But the Tower was destroyed.

DOCTOR: Indeed, but the Tardis escaped her entrapment at the split second it exploded.

TURLOUGH: And she made a quick jump to here a few hours hence.

DOCTOR: No, not quite. I'd imagine she took a century off first to rest and recuperate after Qel's beastly treatment.

TURLOUGH: I wonder what happened to the others, To Seo and Xen? All the ones we sent back to Ember?

DOCTOR: The future of Mankind is already written, Turlough. Causality moves like a river, inexorable, unstoppable. You can't change it.

TURLOUGH: That's what I told Lena. But I don't know if I believe it. If that's true, if fate is cast in stone, then why do you bother to stop and get involved? Why not just pass on by, like I said when we arrived?

DOCTOR: Only the broad strokes have been laid down. It's in the moments between the ticks of the clock where life truly thrives, where we can make a difference.

TURLOUGH: And the Sleepers, the last humans? What about their future?

DOCTOR: There will be someone to watch over them.

TURLOUGH: So, can we go inside, then? My fingers are turning blue.

DOCTOR: Certainly.

(Tardis door opens.)

DOCTOR: Any thoughts on a destination?

TURLOUGH: Somewhere warm.

(Tardis door closes. The Tardis dematerialises.)

(The Tardis materialises, door opens.)

XEN: (weakly) You came.

DOCTOR: Yes, Xen.

XEN: Came to gloat, to mock?

DOCTOR: To say goodbye.

XEN: I am the last human being in the Universe. Ember withers. The sun fades to nothing. Humanity ceases to exist. Please, don't let me die, Doctor. Save me. Save.

DOCTOR: I'm sorry. This is how it must end. Change and evolution, death and rebirth.

XEN: No.

DOCTOR: Rest now. Let go. Sleep.

XEN: Forgive us.

DOCTOR: Sleep.